

What is claimed is:

1. A method of weighing a plurality of portions of semi-solid matter comprising the steps of:

providing a receptacle for receiving individual portions;  
rotatably mounting said receptacle to a load cell for producing electrical indications according to an applied load;  
providing a motor which operates in response to a control signal;  
connecting the motor to the receptacle with a disengageable connection for driving the receptacle in rotary motion;  
sending a control signal to the motor to disengage the connection after a portion is received; and  
determining the weight of the portion from load cell indications after the connection is disengaged.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of sending a control signal to the motor to rotate the receptacle to discharge the portion after determining the portion weight.

3. The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of sending a control signal to the motor to rotate to position the receptacle to receive a next portion.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of receiving electrical indications from the load cell to determine when the portion is received in the receptacle.

5. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of sending a control signal to the motor to disengage the connection after the portion is received.

6. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of determining from the load cell electrical indications when the portion is received in the receptacle, and sending a control

signal to the motor to disengage the connection after the portion is received.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of determining whether the portion weight falls within predetermined limits, and sending a control signal to the motor to rotate the receptacle to propel the portion based upon said determination.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

inputting values for a delay time and a portion impact weight indication;

receiving a weight indication in excess of the portion impact weight indication value which triggers the measuring of the delay time; and

determining the portion weight from at least one weight indication received at the expiration of the delay time.

9. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

storing a value of the load cell weight indication in an empty condition; and

determining the portion weight by subtracting the empty load cell indication from at least one weight indication received at the expiration of the delay time.

10. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

inputting values for an interval duration, an interval count value N, a consistency variance, and a portion impact weight indication;

receiving a weight indication in excess of the portion impact weight indication value; and

determining the portion weight from an average of at least N successive weight indications having a difference from one another no more than the consistency variance, which successive indications are received at intervals equal to the interval duration, and which successive indications are received following the weight indication in excess of the portion impact weight.

11. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

storing a value of the load cell weight indication in an empty condition; and

determining the portion weight by subtracting the empty load cell indication from at least one weight indication received at the expiration of the delay time.

12. A method of weighing a plurality of portions of semi-solid matter comprising the steps of:

providing a receptacle for receiving individual portions;

rotatably mounting said receptacle to a load cell for producing electrical indications according to an applied load;

providing a motor which operates in response to a control signal;

connecting the motor to the receptacle with a disengageable connection which operates in response to a control signal;

sending a control signal to the connection to disengage after a portion is received; and

determining the weight of the portion from load cell indications after the connection is disengaged.

13. An apparatus for weighing a plurality of portions of semi-solid matter comprising:

a load cell for producing electrical indications according to an applied load;

a receptacle rotatably mounted to said load cell for receiving individual portions;

a motor which operates in response to a control signal for driving the receptacle in rotary motion;

a disengageable connection between the motor and the receptacle; and

a processor in electrical communication with the load cell and the motor, the processor programmed to receive electrical indications from the load cell for determining a portion weight and to send a control signal to the motor to disengage the connection.

14. The apparatus of clam 13 wherein the processor is programmed to send a control signal to the motor to rotate the receptacle to discharge the portion.
15. The apparatus of clam 13 wherein the processor is programmed to send a control signal to the motor to position the receptacle to receive a next portion.
16. The apparatus of clam 13 wherein the processor is programmed to receive electrical indications from the load cell for determining a portion weight after the connection is disengaged.
17. The apparatus of clam 13 wherein the processor is programmed to receive electrical indications from the load cell for determining when a portion is received in the receptacle, and to send a control signal to the motor to disengage the connection after the portion is received.
18. The apparatus of clam 13 wherein the processor is programmed to determine from the load cell electrical indications when a portion is received in the receptacle, and to send a control signal to the motor to disengage the connection after the portion is received.
19. The apparatus of clam 13 wherein the processor is programmed to determine whether the portion weight falls within predetermined limits, and to send a control signal to the motor to rotate the receptacle to propel the portion based upon said determination.
20. The apparatus of clam 13 further comprising an analog/digital converter.
21. The apparatus of clam 13 further comprising a dampening device for the load cell.